

William Caton, Secretary of FCC
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington D.C. 20554

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Docket Number 93-48

Hearing in reference to Children's Television Act

As a reading teacher I envision TV linked to literacy. First, I see reader friendly, highlighted captions on educational and commercial television. Second, I see students creatively communicating what they learn in school on television.

Please view the enclosed video, "Link TV & Literacy" (8 minutes). It demonstrates an inexpensive way to improve literacy and children's television programming.

Highlighted Captions

Experts agree reading aloud is the most important thing parents can do to help their children get ready to read. Many parents do not read aloud to their children and many of those who do, do not point out words (major mistake)! Considering the average child spends over 5000 hours watching television before entering kindergarten, it is critical that television programs link TV and literacy with highlighted captions. Children have no idea their favorite television characters are modeling appropriate intonation, articulation, and fluency while reading their scripts.

Television has the potential to become a beautiful, moving picture book. Due to the Disabilities Act new televisions include tele-caption decoder chips. However, captions at this time are not reader friendly. I would like to see highlighted captions which have slightly larger text, upper and lower case letters, and a translucent background with text that changes color as individual words, key words, or phrases are spoken so the auditory/visual correlation could be made simultaneously by the audience.

Inexpensive Educational Programming

Students at my school are expected to creatively communicate what they are learning on video. This stretches students a lot more than taking a multiple choice test and is certainly more motivating. HyperStudio, an Apple IIGS, and a video overlay card are used to produce the reader friendly, highlighted captions. While our videos are not difficult to make, I'm anxiously awaiting the development of an inexpensive, user friendly desktop video editing system that creates highlighted

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captions through voice recognition so our videos will look more professional with less effort. In a classroom setting it is important that minimal amounts of time are spent on the technological aspects of the video production process. Our videos are shown on the local cable access station to the delight of peers, siblings, parents, grandparents, neighbors, and school board members. They are more popular than prime time TV and meet the cognitive, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of children 16 and under.

Please consider linking TV and literacy through The Children's Television Act by requiring networks to include highlighted captions and student programming. Linking TV and literacy is an inexpensive way to reach children who are sitting in front of television and not making the connection between speech and the printed word, improve children's television programming, and motivate students.

Sincerely,

Nancy Kroll

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If you didn't see the enclosed video yet, now is your chance. Enjoy!

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